

YOUTH

Benchmark Statement

Outreach youth regarding occupant protection, pedestrian safety, bicycle safety, drugs/alcohol, and safe driving practices, in order to decrease the death and injury rate of children age 18 and younger.

Objectives

To work with student groups such as Utah Student Safety Program, Students Against Driving Drunk, and Peer Leadership Teams, in 25 high schools. To conduct an annual Utah Student Safety Program conference, and support the National Student Safety Program. To provide assemblies/presentations to 50% of the elementary schools in Safe Communities. To assist with alcohol/drug prevention programs on 10 college campuses. To assist with 40 bikerodeos. To implement five teen courts. To provide statewide training for all teen court participants.

Accomplishments

Safety for our youth and young driver issues remain a priority of the Utah Highway Safety Office (UHSO) prevention and education agenda. We continue to work cooperatively with various agencies that have a primary interest in youth issues, and strive to outreach our youth with innovative approaches that will impact the decisions they make in their daily lives.

The annual *Utah Student Safety Program* (USSP) conference was held in Moab, Utah in April 2001.

Participants attending this year's conference came from 24 junior and senior high schools throughout the state. A motivational speaker was brought in from Texas to work with the students to help ignite their ability to lead and succeed with their school's traffic safety activities. The speaker even provided a segment on patriotism, which was well received. They learned techniques, sharpened their skills, and focused on accomplishing goals, managing time, taking risks, overcoming adversity, and tapping into their own talents. They participated in the Fatal Vision

to raise funds to support their traffic safety activities and attend the National Student Safety Program Conference. New USSP officers were elected and are presently working with UHSO staff to prepare for next year's annual conference.

The annual *National Student Safety Program* conference was held in Honolulu, Hawaii in July 2001. Participating students and advisors left the conference with new ideas, programs, information and resources, to help them hold educational



2001 Utah Student Safety Program Conference

impaired driver education activity; they learned how to become better leaders, resolve conflict, and run effective meetings. Participating students were also given the opportunity to share information with each other and ideas

activities in their own areas. This conference was filled with educational experiences designed to promote youth traffic safety and other youth-related issues such as drug and alcohol intervention and prevention

programs, general safety information, and health issues. The speakers at this conference were exceptional.

In July 2001, the Highway Safety Office sponsored a traffic safety educational booth at The Warped Tour. This is an all-day concert event with thousands of young adults visiting a variety of booths. Students from our students safety groups, along with Highway Safety staff members and

Utah Highway Patrol troopers, worked together to educate the audience on the devastating consequences that can take place, should they choose to drink and drive.

The fourth annual **Youth Court Convention** was held at the Southern Utah University campus in June of 2000. Approximately 350 youth leaders and adult advisors from around the state attended to share ideas, work out problems, and receive valuable training. The training sessions were on restorative justice, conflict resolution, ethics, confidentiality, creative dispositions, community service options, mentoring, leadership, and peer counseling. Other items on the agenda included a motivational session with Thurl Bailey (former Utah Jazz player), mock hearings, and an awards banquet/ceremony in which Judge Howe of Utah's Supreme Court was

the keynote speaker.

Several court members (both advisors and students) attended the national youth court conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and many participated on the program. Utah's improvisational group from local high schools made such an impression on the attendees that they were invited back to the opening event at the 2002 national conference in Washington, D.C.

The **Youth Court Advisory Board**, which was created by the legislature to oversee and regulate the activities of youth/peer courts statewide, is currently working on ways to have the

legislature fund certain activities. Seven new court programs were started this year, bringing the statewide total to 45. (Two programs no longer exist). All seven new courts received mini-grants to assist with various operational costs.

A study to evaluate youth/peer court programs in Utah was completed and the results published. The publication called, **A Critical Examination of Peer Court Attendees in Utah: Who is Likely to Benefit?**, followed youth offenders to see if their youth/peer court experience helped curb their participation in delinquency activities and to see if personality types had something to do with their positive/negative response to the program. This study has been sent to all youth/peer courts statewide in the hope that it will be of some benefit to

their programs and the way they process offenders. Additional copies are available at the Utah Highway Safety Office.

A variety of prevention programs on substance use/abuse were actively promoted on nine Utah Campuses. Some of the efforts partially funded by Highway Safety were aimed at the underage youth. Other targeted the over-21 young adults.

The UHSO's goal to assist with 40 bicyclerodeos statewide was accomplished in the Wasatch front area alone. In addition, numerous bicycle rodeos throughout the state were offered through local Safe Community and SAFE KIDS projects.

Challenges

The Utah Highway Safety Office is always trying to ensure it has an impact on our youth by looking for new and innovative ways to approach Utah's youth with the same basic safety messages. It is sometimes difficult to reach certain age groups with the available resources.